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Letters to the Editor

Nuclear Freeze and Nuclear Sanity

Editor: The Sun's March 18 editorial, "Overkill," describing the nuclear freeze resolution as a "simplistic, emotional, highly politicized" congressional act is indeed "simplistic, emotional" and "highly politicized."

The Sun claims that "objectives consistent with the maintenance of essential equivalence is what the long negotiations are all about." Many doubt this is the goal of the administration, in view of the firing of Eugene Rostow for trying to reach agreement with the Soviets, in view of Rowny's "hit list" of people with the same motives, in view of the nomination of the neophyte Kenneth Adelman when, as Senator Mathias so aptly pointed out in voting against his nomination, the president, his security advisor, and the secretary of state are also neophytes in this field.

The Sun's editorial states, "Any negotiation of a verifiable [freeze] agreement could be as complicated as talks of reductions and limitations." This is disputed by such knowledgeable figures as retired Admiral Noel Gaylor, former head of the National Security Agency; William Colby, former head of the CIA; Robert McNamara, former Secretary of Defense; George Kennan, former ambassador to Russia and distinguished analyst of Soviet affairs; Fritz Mondale, former vice president; and our own Senator Sarbanes, no slouch in the brains and savvy area.

The idea that "obsolete weapons vulnerable to a first strike are the most 'destabilizing' because they undercut the credibility of the deterrent" brings up the old Reagan chestnut that the U.S. is "behind" the

U.S.S.R. in that its weapons are "old" and those of the Soviets are "new," and they have more of them.

The Sun's editorial wonders whether it is "really wise to give greater priority to the freezing of present nuclear inventories than to pushing for reductions." Do the people who control the editorial policy of this paper seriously believe the present administration is pushing for reduction?

The Sun goes on to deplore "the marchers, the protesters and the mass-mail promoters" trying "to preempt the role of deliberative legislation." What does The Sun think is the answer to the lobbying of weapons manufacturers, who make more from military production than civilian production? How do the senators from Lockheed and Boeing, the secretary of defense from General Dynamics, and T. K. Jones from Boeing promote "more deliberative legislation?" Do they not "block more hopeful paths to nuclear sanity?"

Perhaps it is significant that when the Defense Department in December asked reporters to sign a secrecy agreement before attending a briefing about Soviet military capabilities, an agreement which required the journalists to report to the Pentagon any effort made by others to obtain the sensitive information, the New York Times refused to send a correspondent to the briefing because of the restrictive conditions. Others left the briefing. The representatives of The Sun stayed. Once again, "We wonder!"

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Baltimore.